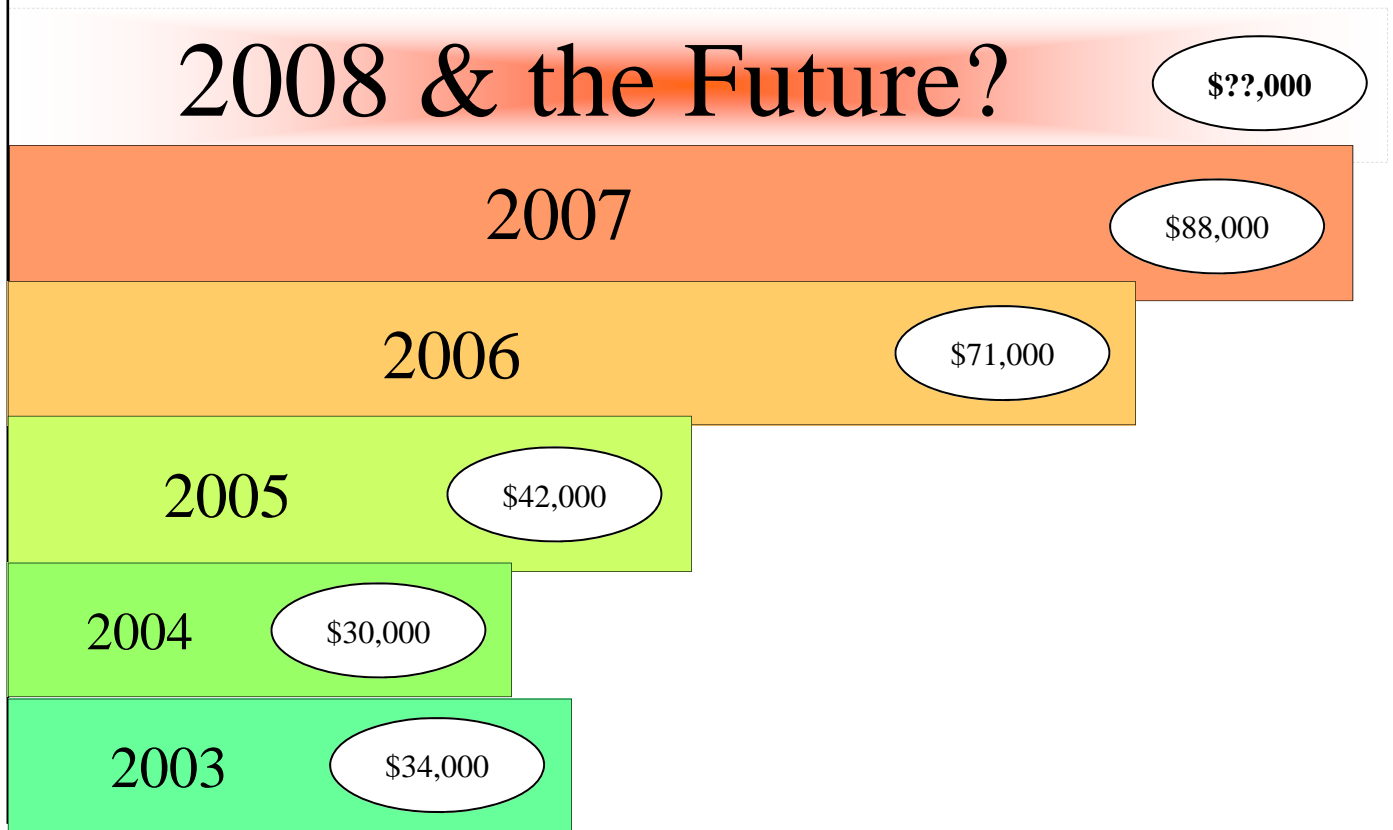


Five Years & Growing

A Report from the Board of Directors



Above—Relative income growth for our first five years
(see p. 11 for more business information)

SPRING 2008 INDEX

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Green Village Schools

is a 501(c) (3) Charity.
Donations are deductible
under U.S. Federal Tax Code.
Please consult your tax advisor.

CURRENT EVENTS

Demolition and Construction:

Following a deadly wet and cold winter in Afghanistan, we are pleased to report that demolition and construction have started at the school. After a meeting with the elders, it was agreed that we should remove the Mosque and the four mud brick classrooms, all of which were protruding into the center of the campus.

The Mosque, which we would probably regard as a small chapel in the west (about the size of two classrooms), existed on the property before the school was started. In its old position it protruded into the campus. But, thanks to donations from the Muslim community in Portland, funds were available to start the demolition and rebuilding of the Mosque using



Mud structures which are to be razed to make room for the new classrooms.

the same firebrick and finishes as the classrooms which will help it blend into the campus. Aiding in its demolition and reconstruction, local villagers provided free labor and materials to prepare the site. Everyone in the village is in awe that funds from the US are being sent for this project. We hope additional funds will be provided to finish the Mosque's construction.

Moving the Mosque to its new corner location abutting the north and west walls will provide room for five new classrooms. After these classrooms are built, no additional building is expected on the "ground level" and we will be able to start finishing the campus grounds to make the area safe and aesthetically pleasing for the large student body. By removing these old buildings, placing new rooms along the walls, and constructing the computer lab as a second story over the library, we will maximize the limited open space in the campus. Thanks to two generous donations, we have the funds in Afghanistan to complete the computer lab, construction of which began in March. Funds for the completion of the new classrooms and campus grounds are now the top priority for GVS at this time.

Kent "Rip" Van Winckel, Ex. Dir.

CURRENT EVENTS continued

Government Recognition Pursued:

Representatives from the school have been making repeated trips to Kabul and Lashkar Gah pursuing the licensing of the school through the twelfth grade and arranging for government funding of more teachers. Recently they have succeeded in getting an agreement with the office of the Minister of Education in Kabul, but its progress to the Provincial and District Education Offices is bogged down in bureaucratic channels. This is delaying the final certification of the school through the twelfth grade and the funding of more teachers. We trust our staff's perseverance will encourage those who have delayed the process to fulfill their responsibilities they are paid to do, and that this will be sooner than later. Just recently we understand that **our school has been included as a high school** on the list of schools to be calculated into the government's education budget. In any case, our previous agreement still allows us to add a tenth grade to accommodate our students who pass the ninth grade this year.

Even when we are fully accredited, we will never get funding for all of our teachers. This is due to the government's standard of one teacher to fifty students. This is substantially different from our ratio of no more than one teacher to thirty students, a ratio we believe is important to ensure we provide a quality education for our children. Consequently we will have to fund this difference into the foreseeable future.

Mohammad Khan Kharoti, President

Sending Donations to Afghanistan:

Last spring we shipped 15,000 pounds of donated supplies, including computers, school books, medical books, and medical supplies to Afghanistan. We were fortunate to have the help of the Oregon National Guard, who provided a storage facility for us, and arranged for transportation with the South Carolina National Guard who, last summer, replaced the Oregon unit at Camp Phoenix in Kabul. The majority of the school supplies and computers arrived at the school in the fall. The computers had been packed in containers filled with Styrofoam peanuts, which the villagers turned into stuffing for pillows. Some of the supplies have made it as far as Kandahar, where they are still awaiting safe transportation to their final destinations.

CURRENT EVENTS continued



Donated computers waiting to be repackaged for 2007 shipment.

We now have 3,000 pounds of donated school books, school supplies, medical books and medical supplies neatly sorted and stacked on pallets in a small Public Storage unit in Portland. We are hoping to arrange for shipment through the Denton Program, which is administered jointly by USAID, the Department of State and Department of Defense. This program provides transport of humanitarian assistance materials for NGO's at no charge, when space is available on military cargo aircraft. Hundreds of agencies have used this program to send donations to countries all over the world. This shipment will be our trial run with the Denton Program. As with any

government agency, especially when dealing with foreign governments, the application process is complicated and time-consuming. There are strict regulations including labeling and weighing every box, and itemizing their contents. The shipment must be inspected by the U.S. Government before transport is approved. There are no guarantees that the application will be accepted, or when or how the supplies might be shipped. While we're waiting to send this first shipment, we have very little storage space for any additional donations., space being limited to the small Public Storage unit and our own garages. We're hoping that eventually the Denton Program will be an effective means to transport all of our supplies to Afghanistan, and then we can start collecting donations on a regular basis.

Rosalyn Montgomery, MD, Board

Library Books:

Now that the library construction is complete, how do we stock its shelves with books? What kind of books and in which languages? Fortunately the web site has attracted help from a wide variety of sources. Sharareh Shahlaie with the International Central Library in Toronto sent us a list of books available in Dari. We selected the ones we thought most appropriate and received in the mail 60 wonderful children's books of poetry and short stories with colorful drawings, perfect for the

CURRENT EVENTS continued

youngest students who are learning the Dari language as part of the government curriculum. Veronique Huguet, with the International Committee for the Red Cross in Washington, D.C., sent us books in Pashtu about Islam. Our board does not promote religion at the school and we specifically avoid non-Islamic religious books, but some instruction about Islam is part of the Afghan government's curriculum. The books from the ICRC will be a great addition to the library. Some are about the life of Prophet Mohammad, some about the Koran and one specifically describes the education of girls as a goal of Islam.

For books in English we have relied mostly on local sources. I was invited to a book sale in Hillsdale, OR with the offer of taking without charge any books left at the end. From this sale we

now have packaged for shipment to Shin Kalay a complete 29 book set of encyclopedias, several atlases, a number of books on general science, quite a few on animals of the world, some fiction for older students, and some books for beginning readers of English. Jo'an Sterr, a retired teacher in Vancouver, WA, who has a special interest in helping children in Afghanistan, invited me to her home to peruse books and school supplies she had originally collected for another project. Sherry Brown, a teacher at Eugene Field Elementary School in East Springfield, MO sent a generous gift of



Boys attending dedication ceremony in the new library.

school supplies and books which had been gathered by her second grade class. And most recently Michelle Nelson, a school counselor at Molalla Elementary School and Dickey Prairie Elementary School (OR), who had worked as an air traffic controller with the Oregon Air National Guard at a NATO base in Kandahar (AF), held a book drive and a penny drive which raised over \$500. We picked up the books while visiting the schools to speak with over 400 students who had collected the money. Helping children here connect with children in Afghanistan is part of the process and one of our goals.

CURRENT EVENTS continued

At this point we are discouraging further donations of books in English from out of state because of the cost to the donor of postage and the heavy screening of books we must undertake. We would prefer to prescreen the books ourselves from local donors. It is impossible for young children and their parents to foresee all of the reasons books might be inappropriate or to anticipate the content we look for specifically to help educate young readers in Afghanistan who have newly acquired English skills. But we really appreciate every inquiry and every offer of support for the school.

Steve Boyer, MD, Board Chair

CURRENT PRIORITIES:

On the back of this newsletter, page 12, is a list of priorities which will complete the construction phase of this campus. Making this campus an oasis from the strife and poverty of the area will emphasize the value placed on education, and demonstrate to all that peoples with dissimilar beliefs and cultures are willing to help them succeed. We ask that you continue to support these efforts and make a lasting effect on the children of Afghanistan.



First we need to find ourselves in this world.

FROM A DREAM
TO A SCHOOL IN THE DESERT
A SCHOOL YOU HAVE MADE A REALITY

THE BLUE DOOR

This door opens to the girls' section of the school at Shin Kalay. The beautiful color, like a spice, is meant to wake the senses; encourage scholarship; lift the spirit; even salve summer's heat.

The blue door, and every other part of the school, each beam, board and slather of plaster was intended to educate the children of Shin Kalay, boys **and girls**. But this year the door has come to represent not an opening, but an obstacle. For many months, no girls have passed through it.



How long must she wait for this door to open?

In some aspects, the school at Shin Kalay has prospered. Every other school in Nad Ali District has been shuttered by violence, fear, and corruption. But in spite of the turmoil, the school at Shin Kalay has remained open, vibrant, attracting boys from other communities where schools have been closed. In fact, boys' attendance at the school has increased from last year.

Meanwhile, girls' education has become piecemeal, carried out in the security and safety of a few intrepid living rooms. Our best guess is that two hundred are still attending classes. But it is, at best, only a guess.

The pull to keep girls from attending school rests not only on the fears of violence, but on cultural custom. The population of students at the school is beginning to mature. Some students are now in their teens, an age troubling not only here in the States, but in Afghanistan as well. Cultural pressures for the young women of Afghanistan are especially ponderous; the honor of the family rests on their shoulders. Protecting Afghanistan's young women from the temptations and difficulties of mingling, unescorted, among boys and men is essential. As for schooling, Afghan

THE BLUE DOOR continued

customs require that young women not only attend separate classes but that they are protected even from being seen by men and boys outside their own families.

The GVS board is deliberating avenues to accommodate both custom and the need for classes. We are committed that all children of Shin Kalay receive a superior education. To do so, the school has begun focusing all its efforts, attention, and resources on regaining classroom study for girls as well as boys. Yet reopening the blue door remains one of GVS' most profound challenges. The board is considering a menu of alternatives ranging from constructing a new school that serves only girls, to standardizing and overseeing in-home education, even to opening the school solely to girls, realizing that boys are more likely to have other avenues for education.

The GVS board realizes it cannot work in isolation to solve this problem. In fact, the school's most potent tool lies in the villagers of Shin Kalay. Mohammad Kharoti has begun communication with villagers. He will soon return to Shin Kalay. The village has always been devoted to education for its children. Throughout the spring and summer, GVS will be working with the village on a solution. Together we will eventually unlock, and reopen the beautiful blue door.

All the children of Shin Kalay will be educated. It is our mission.

Jeannie Burt, Board

*“An educated boy develops into an educated man.
An educated girl develops an educated family.”*

THE ROAD TO AND MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Building a school seems to be a fairly straight forward undertaking, but **the road to success is strewn with pitfalls and sometimes stretches our patience and understanding.** Having the Kharoti family in Shin Kalay has overcome many obstacles that would otherwise have stifled us. With their help we have learned to view this project as belonging to the locals, letting them assume responsibility for building consensus, making decisions, and solving disputes, and us assuming the role of consultant and financier. This has been working rather well with the proof being the high enrollment, the quality of the education and the physical facilities, the relatively low cost of construction, and the fact that the school has remained open when most of the others in the surrounding rural area are closed.

There is one basic element to our approach we recognized was imperative for success in providing an outreach to a foreign land - that is to accept the existing customs. GVS is a non-religious and apolitical outreach. This merely means that we do not have a religious or political agenda in our outreach regardless of our own individual biases.

In Afghanistan, Islam is woven into the fabric of the society, from the country's constitution to the curriculum of the school, from the basis of hygiene to the respect for parents and elders. Even the need to educate girls is supported in their beliefs. To attempt to disentangle these teachings from the curriculum mandated by the government would be impossible, and to try to do so would be disrespectful of their culture. We as a board are used to working within diverse groups. We take diversity for granted. But in Afghanistan acceptance of diversity is being learned ever so slowly. Education will help develop a greater acceptance and understanding of the diversity of thought in the world and even in today's Afghan society.

Our goal is to provide the tools to teach the students to make informed decisions based on greater understanding and empathy, to become more creative in problem solving, and to gain the knowledge to become successful in whatever profession they choose. To accomplish this, we must respect the people and their ways, understanding that change, if there is to be any, must come from within. **Our ultimate success will be determined when the school's educational process becomes self perpetuating and the pursuit of greater understanding is a way of life.**

Kent (Rip) Van Winckel, Exec. Dir.

BUSINESS REPORT

You've Made It Happen:

GVS supporters generously responded to our appeal for operational funds to finish the school year by providing enough to also see us through the summer. This generosity has all but assured that we can provide Summer School and continue minor maintenance after the unusually harsh winter in Afghanistan. Such a great response encourages all involved with this outreach.

GVS Passes IRS “Advanced Ruling”:

All new charities are subject to an IRS five year review following their “advanced ruling period” to determine if they qualify as a “permanent” charity. We are pleased to announce that GVS received its letter from the IRS in February: *“you continue to be classified as an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c) (3) of the code.”*

Review Reveals Unique Accomplishments:

Reviewing GVS’s first five years for the IRS application provided some interesting data. During our first five years **95% of all donations have gone directly for the school’s operational expenses and construction projects.** One of the major reasons for this is that GVS (the US operation) does not have any paid staff, relying on volunteers instead. Ensuring that we continue to maximize the funds to the school will of course be a major goal for us, but we also know we must pay an accountant to review our books and keep you informed through these newsletters we write and print ourselves.

Increasing donations, as the front page bar graph indicates, is but one indication of the growing health of GVS. We have also seen a **widening support base** with donor ZIP Codes rising from 64 (representing ten states) in 2003 to 124 (representing 29 states) in 2007. We have also received donations from Puerto Rico, and three Canadian provinces. How the word of Oregon based GVS spread so widely from Hawaii to New Hampshire, and Alaska to Puerto Rico, we are not sure, but it is gratifying.

GVS has been blessed in that it has received some sizable donations (greater than \$1,000) and yet smaller donations account for nearly half of GVS support. Repeat donors are especially important as they represent the foundation of our organization. **Without this support, the children of Shin Kalay would not have an operating school known for its quality of education and superior physical facilities.**

James Loch, MD, Treasurer

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Kent "Rip" Van Winckel
Executive Director

To:

Email: Info@GreenVillageSchools.org

Web Site: www.GreenVillageSchools.org

GVS PRIORITIES

- 1) Funding teachers' salaries, generator fuel, heater propane, maintenance...
- 2) Removing old mud structures
- 3) Constructing new classrooms
- 4) Stocking and equipping Library and Computer Lab
- 5) Purchasing Recreational Equipment

In the middle of last year's harsh winter, a youngster heads home, without shoes, after receiving clothing donated by the Oregon National Guard. Many students are in need of shoes and clothing.

Our school grounds are also in obvious need of repair for the safety and comfort of the students, especially after such a bad fall and winter and the disorder construction brought with it.



Tough Feet!